

Obituary

DR C S NICOL, CBE, MD, FRCP

Claude Scott Nicol who died on 17 February 1984 was born in Dublin and educated at Harrow School, St John's College, Oxford, and St Mary's Hospital, London. He qualified MRCS, LRCP in 1936 and graduated MBBS two years later. For two years after qualification he worked in various departments in St Mary's Hospital including the venereology clinic.

Early in 1939 he returned to Oxford to work under Professor (later Sir Howard) Florey, but he was a keen territorial and was called up at the outbreak of World War II. He soon became a specialist in venereology and was posted to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, near Winchester at a time when the Venereology Department, under the able direction of Colonel Ambrose King, had expanded to fill most of the hospital. While at Netley, Captain Nicol took part in important studies on fever therapy in the treatment of syphilis. Later he was posted to the Middle East and became Advisor in Venereology to the 9th Army. After the war he remained in the Territorial Army, rising to the rank of full Colonel and commanding a general hospital (T and AVR). While holding this position he was appointed Queen's Honorary Physician, one of the few venereologists to hold this distinction. He was appointed Honorary Consultant in Genitourinary Medicine to the Army and helped to train general duty and specialist RAMC officers. In addition he sat on the committees administering the RAMC benevolent funds. Only a year before his death he was guest of honour at a Consultants' Dinner in the Headquarters Officers' Mess at the Royal Army Medical College, Millbank, London.

In 1946 Dr. Nicol obtained the MRCP

and he proceeded MD in the same year. He was elected FRCP in 1962. After the war he became a consultant at The London Hospital, and in 1947 he was appointed a consultant at St Bartholomew's Hospital. From 1949 to 1950 he held a fellowship in medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, United States of America, working with the late Dr Earle Moore and taking part in an important study of cardiovascular syphilis.

In 1956 Claude Nicol was appointed consultant in charge of Lydia Clinic, St Thomas' Hospital and resigned his post at The London Hospital. He built up the departments at St Bartholomew's and St Thomas' Hospitals but it was the latter department that particularly flourished under his leadership. He was a meticulous physician who took great care of his patients. He was a sound teacher who formally and informally demonstrated a wide knowledge of his subject, and he expected his juniors to practise to his own high standards.

In 1968 he was appointed Consultant Advisor to the Department of Health and Social Security. He was equally conscientious in carrying out the duties of this post, which he took up at a time when clinics throughout the country were under pressure from increasing numbers of patients with a widening variety of conditions. Through his efforts funds became available for new and improved premises, new posts, and for research.

He was Secretary and President of the Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases (MSSVD) and Secretary General of the International Union against the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses (IUVD). He was very popular internation-

ally and after his retirement letters continued to arrive at his departments from all over the world.

He encouraged research, published many papers, contributed to books and was joint author of a textbook on venereal diseases. He was a founder organiser of the British Postgraduate Medical Federation Course in Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and the Diploma Examination of the Society of Apothecaries of London. In recognition of his manifold activities he was appointed CBE on his retirement from the National Health Service in 1977. Despite all his other activities he had found time to build up a private practice and he continued to see private patients for a few years after his retirement.

This impressive catalogue of activities and achievements tells us little of the man. On first acquaintance, at least to his junior medical staff, he was a little remote, but beneath this exterior was a warm friendly personality. He took a great interest in his medical staff and their careers and helped many with their medical and personal problems. He took a wide interest in the whole subject and while Adviser to the DHSS developed a remarkable knowledge of the problems facing individual clinics all over the country.

In spite of all these professional activities he was devoted to his family. He was an excellent photographer which combined well with his interest in archeology and travel. Sadly during his last few years he suffered ill health, but he enjoyed his retirement to the country where he became a keen gardener. He is survived by his wife and three children.

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